THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. With a view to accelerate the exploration of oil and gas in the coastal areas of the country, the Government has signed Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with Public Sector Companies, Private Sector Companies and their consortia in respect of 24 exploration blocks in shallow water areas and 15 exploration blocks in deep water areas under first and second round of New Exploration Licensing Policy. (NELP).

Out of the above 39 blocks, 3 blocks in shallow water and 1 block in deep water fall wholly or partly in the areas offshore of the State of Kerala.

Irregularities in allotment of dealership for petroleum products

3166. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Punjab Kesari under the heading 'Kendra Sarkar Ke Petrol pump va Gas Agency Vitran Mein Bhajapa Netaon ke Pau Barah;'

(b) if so, the details thereof including the total number of persons who were awarded dealership of Petrol, Gas and Kerosene;

(c) how many of them were actually connected with the leaders of B.J.P. MLA/MP; and

(d) what is Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the period 12.6.2000 to 31.7.2001, 41 retail outlets and 35 LPG distributorships and 2 SKO-LDO dealerships have been allotted in the State of Haryana by the newly-constituted Dealer Selection Boards.

(c) and (d) The information regarding relationships or other connections of the persons, who have been allotted dealerships/ distributorships after the selection by the DSBs, with political leaders of any party is neither collected nor available.

The following Grievance Redressal System is provided in the guidelines for selection of dealers/distributors:—

(i) All the complaints against selection of dealers/distributors received by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas/Oil companies/Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs) will be referred to the concerned Chairman of the DSB.

(ii) The coordinator will place all such complaints/grievances before the Chairman of the Board for his direction/decision. The decision of the Chairman will be conveyed by the Coordinator to the concerned oil company for further inquiry/compliance.

(iii) In the event of the inquiry to be conducted against the empanelled candidates(s), an officer not below the rank of General Manager of the concerned oil company will nominate two officers not below the rank of Chief Manager for inquiry who will submit their report within 30 days from the date of constitution of such inquiry. The Oil Company, thereafter, will forward the inquiry report to the DSB. The Chairman, in consultation with the members of the DSB, will examine the report with reference to the complaint and convey his directions/order for compliance by the Oil Company.

In addition to the above, the Government has entrusted the responsibility for inquiry into the complaints against Chairmen/ Members of the DSBs to the Director General, Anti-Adulteration Cell in this Ministry.